(a) whether Government consider to depute a study team to Kuwait and UAE to take stock of the safety measures of NRIs;

(b) how many families belonging to Kerala have since been evacuated from Kuwait after commencement of the war;

(c) whether Government would arrange to introduce additional flights for their evacuation with concessional fares;

(d) whether any foreign Air lines Companies levy exorbitant rates from the evacuated families; and

(e) if so, whether Government consider to intervene in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA): (a) In anticipation of the outbreak of hostilities in Iraq, the Government had drawn up contingency plans to evacuate Indians from Kuwait through Saudi Arabia, if necessary. However, the international airports in Kuwait and all other Gulf countries have remained open to scheduled commercial flights since the beginning of hostilities and no request has been received for evacuation of Indians.

(d) No.

(e) to (f) Do not arise.

Indo-U.S. agreement for Mutual Cooperation

3006. DR. AKHILESH DAS: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and the U.S. have formally put behind the so-called 'sanction regime by signing an agreement in Feb. 2003 for greater mutual cooperation in the critical trinity areas of dual use technology, nuclear and space sciences;

(a) if so, the terms of the agreement;

(b) the follow up action in pursuance of the agreement; and

(b) whether similar sanctions imposed on Pakistan have also been lifted by the U.S.; if so, how much of aid has been released to Pakistan thereafter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) The United States had lifted the sanctions against India in September 2001. India and the United States signed a Statement of Principles to promote and facilitate bilateral high technology commerce, including trade in "dual use' goods and technologies, on 05 February 2003 in Washington D.C.

(b) The Statement of Principles outlines a number of steps to be taken by the two countries, including the U.S. intention to address the regulatory and policy issues relating to exports of U.S. "dual use" goods and technologies to India, to broadly advance bilateral high technology commerce.

(c)The India-U.S. High Technology Cooperation Group will facilitate and undertake promotional activities, review regulatory issus in the two countries and generate awareness among the government and private sector agencies on both sides about opportunities for high technology commerce and associated regulatory environment.

(d)The United States has lifted sanctions against Pakistan, including those imposed on it for the 1998 nuclear tests and the 1999 military coup. Government is not aware of a similar Statement of Principles being signed between Pakistan and the United States. The U.S. bilateral financial aid for Pakistan in the U.S. fiscal years 2001 to 2003 is around U.S. $1.7 billion and is likely to be enhacned by another US $200 million in the current U.S. fiscal year.

Permanent membership of Security Council

3007. DR. AKHILESH DAS: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether during the recent NAM Summit at Kaula Lumpur the question of permanent membership of the UN Security Council to India was discussed;

(b) if so, the outcome thereof, indicating the precise case made out by India and the majority response of the NAM Summit; and